Project Title: Behavioral ecology and acoustic communication in Bachman’s sparrow

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Rindy Anderson

This research project is aimed at understanding the different kinds of songs that Bachman’s sparrows sing and why they sing them. This will be a field research project at the DuPuis Nature Preserve and other sites within a few hours drive from FAU. In the field we will capture sparrows using mist nets, mark each bird with color bands for individual ID, map each male’s breeding territory boundaries, and make behavioral observations of birds responding to stimuli played through loudspeakers. We will also record the song repertoires of every male we can find, and then analyze the song data back in the lab, asking questions about how these sparrows use their songs to defend their territories and to attract mates.

Start date: March 2016 End date: July 2016

Student expectations/qualifications:

We are seeking extremely motivated, mature, hard-working students who are excited about field research. Students must be available for field work from March-July 2016. Intensive work will begin in late April when the semester ends and go until early July. Students must have a minimum GPA of 3.0. Priority will be given to students that will be juniors or seniors during the 2015/2016 academic year, and who can commit to the project from March until July. Priority will also be given to students who volunteer in my laboratory during the fall semester of 2015 to get to know us, learn about the project and complete animal research training. Much of the field work will be done in the early morning. Students may be required to camp overnight at field sites in order to begin research at sunrise. Transportation to field sites and camping fees will be provided. If interested, please email Dr. Anderson with a message describing why you are interested in this project and what you hope to gain by being a part of it. Include your major, what animal biology courses you have taken, your current GPA, your availability during the fall of 2015 and spring and summer of 2016, and any skills or experience you have that might be relevant to the project. Dr. Anderson will contact the top candidates for interviews.

Deadline for applicants: Open until spots are filled.